

REMARKS

Please reconsider this application in view of the above amendments and the followings remarks. Applicant thanks the Examiner for carefully reconsidering this application.

Disposition of Claims

Claims 1-3 are pending in this application. Claim 1 is independent. The remaining claims depend, directly or indirectly, from claim 1.

Claim Amendments

Claim 1 has been amended in this reply to clarify the present invention. No new matter has been added by way of this amendment, as support for this amendment may be found, for example, in Figures 7 and 8A of the originally filed application.

Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1-3 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,886,221 ("Minami"). Independent claim 1 has been amended by way of this reply. To the extent that this rejection may still apply to the amended claim, this rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 1 recites a hinge apparatus including a first hinge member, a second hinge member turnably connected to the first hinge member, a moveable member, and a biasing member. The movable member is arranged on a turning axial line of the first and second hinge members in such a manner as to be turnable about the turning axial line and movable in the direction of the turning axial line. The biasing means is then adapted to bias the movable member toward the first hinge member. Further, the first hinge member and the movable member have confronting surfaces, in which one of the confronting surfaces is provided with a

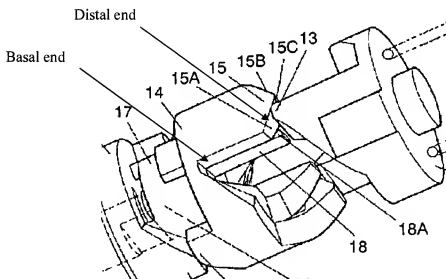
plurality of end face cams extending in the peripheral direction about the turning axial line and equally spacedly arranged in the peripheral direction about the turning axial line. This confronting surface is also provided with a raised wall surface disposed between two of the end face cams which are adjacent in the peripheral direction. A distal end portion of the raised wall surface extends towards the other of the confronting surfaces in the direction of the turning axial line. Furthermore, a recess is formed in a basal end portion of the raised wall surface, wherein the basal end portion is located spacedly from the other of the confronting surfaces. The recess is located at the intersection of the basal end portion of the raised wall surface and the end cam face so as to extend into the raised wall surface in the peripheral direction about the turning axial line. The raised wall surface is then located between the recess and the other of said confronting surfaces in the direction of the turning axial line.

Minami, in particular, shows in Figure 2 a folding device 32 having a movable part 12, a metallic slider 14, an actuator case 25, and an actuator return spring 28. The Examiner asserts that the movable part 12 and the metallic slider 14 read the first hinge member and the movable member, respectively, of the present invention. As such, the movable part 12 includes a movable cam 13 that engages a stationary cam 15 of the metallic slider 14. The Examiner further asserts that “vertical wall next to 15A” reads on the raised wall surface of the claim, and that “recess (15A) is formed a basal end portion of said raised wall surface and located at the intersection of the raised wall surface and the end face cam.”

However, Minami fails to show or suggest all of the elements of amended independent claim 1. Specifically, claim 1 requires that the recess be formed *at the base* (i.e. in a basal end portion) of the raised wall surface. That is, the raised wall surface must have a distal end portion and a basal end portion, and the recess must be formed in the basal end portion. By

including the recess 11e at the basal end portion of the wall surface 11d, the total length of the end face cam 41 may be extended so as to enable more than 180 degrees of rotation between the stationary cylinder 11 and the movable member 42.

The Examiner's assertion that "recess (15A) is formed at a basal end portion of said raised wall surface" is unreasonable. Merriam-Webster defines "basal" as "relating to, situated at, or forming the base," and defines "distal" as "situated away from the point of attachment or origin or a central point especially of the body." As shown in Fig. 1 of Minami, reproduced in part below, 15A of Minami is clearly at the *distal end*, not at the *basal end*, as required by the claim. That is, Fig. 1 of Minami clearly shows that 15A is disposed "situated away from the point of attachment," and not at a portion "forming the base." Thus, Minami fails to show or suggest at least "a recess being formed in a basal end portion of said raised wall surface," as required by the claim.



In view of the above, Minami fails show or suggest all of the limitations of claim

1. Thus, independent claim 1 is patentable over Minami, at least for the above reasons. Claims

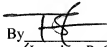
2 and 3 are dependent, either directly or indirectly, from claim 1. Thus, claims 2 and 3 are patentable over Minami, at least for the same reasons as claim 1. Accordingly, withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

Conclusion

Applicant believes this reply is fully responsive to all outstanding issues and places this application in condition for allowance. If this belief is incorrect, or other issues arise, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned or his associates at the telephone number listed below. Please apply any charges not covered, or any credits, to Deposit Account 50-0591 (Reference Number 12088/042001).

Dated: August 11, 2009

Respectfully submitted,

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